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# A WIFE IN RELATION TO A HUSBAND: GREEK DISCOURSE PRAGMATIC AND CULTURAL EVIDENCE FOR INTERPRETING 1 TIM 2:11-15

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## INTRODUCTION

The difficulties and questions surrounding the interpretation of 1 Tim 2:11-15 are perennial and numerous, even apart from issues of authorship and pseudonymity.<sup>1</sup> One approach is to excise these verses as being an interpolation, since they do not align with the views of Jesus and Paul

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\* This article has developed in stages from my class notes, then as a presentation for my colleague Dr. Stacey Minger's class on Women in Ministry (2009), and then most recently as a paper presented April 10, 2015 at the Stone-Campbell Conference, Indianapolis. After this conference, I have continued to enhance the arguments and to add more social-cultural data as well as to interact more carefully with Stephen H. Levinsohn's notes on information structure and discourse features of 1 Timothy. I thank everyone who has contributed to its final form by providing feedback, pushback, and correction. I very pleased to have this published in *JIBS*; I dedicate this article to wives in every culture who seek to be faithful disciples of the Risen Christ.

1. See the commentaries on the issues and bibliography, e.g., I. Howard Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, ICC (London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 436-71; and Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 190-239.

elsewhere about the equality of women.<sup>2</sup> Alternatively, one may view 1 Timothy as Deutero-Pauline and not written with Paul's authorization and therefore as having limited or no value to inform one's view of the role of women within the church.<sup>3</sup> However, neither excising these verses from the letter nor deciding against the Pauline authorship of 1 Timothy will remove 2:11-15 from our Bibles; so we are left to wrestle with these verses.

Below is a translation from the RSV (any translation could have been chosen), with the more important proposed changes of mine placed in italics inside of brackets [...].

<sup>11</sup> Let a woman [*wife*] learn in silence [*quietly*] with all submissiveness. <sup>12</sup> I permit no woman [*wife*] to teach or to have authority over men [*a husband* (singular)]; she is to keep silent [*quiet*]. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was formed first, then Eve; <sup>14</sup> and Adam was not deceived, but the woman [*wife*] was deceived and became a transgressor. <sup>15</sup> Yet [*moreover*] women [*she* =the wife] will be saved [*delivered*] through [*the*] bearing [*of*] children, if she [*they* (plural)] continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.

Modern translations assume that women and men in general are being addressed. However, considerable evidence exists that 2:11-15 has restricted referents in view: a wife in relation to a husband.

Because of the complexity of the issues surrounding 1 Tim 2:11-15 and our frequently entrenched current pre-commitments and preconceptions of how women should or should not behave in (and outside) the church, it is not surprising that no consensus exists among Christ-followers on the proper interpretation of this pericope. The complexity is seen in the following list of interpretive questions that merges my own exegetical queries with the eleven posed by Linda Belleville:<sup>4</sup>

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2. So William Klassen, "Musionius Rufus, Jesus and Paul: Three First-Century Feminists," in *From Jesus to Paul: Studies in Honour of Francis Wright Beare*, ed. J. C. Hurd and G. P. Richardson (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1984), 185–206.

3. I will assume Paul's authorship in this article.

4. Linda Belleville, *Women Leaders in the Church: Three Crucial Questions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 164-65. My questions were independently arrived at, but I have added her questions within the list of questions.

1. What is the context and setting envisioned for the chapter? Worship or Mission setting? Implications?
2. Is there a literary structuring of 2:11-15 that might help guide our interpretation of it?
3. Who is being addressed at 2:11-12, 15 as a γυναίκα (sg.)? Any woman or a wife? Correspondingly, who is the ἀνὴρ (sg.) in 2:12? Any man or a husband? (Cf. Belleville's question #1)
4. "In verse 11 does Paul command a woman to learn *in silence* (i.e., she is not to speak out in public) or to learn *quietly* (i.e., she is not to disrupt worship)?" (Belleville's question #2)
5. "To whom or what is she to be in 'full submission'?" (Belleville's question #3)
6. "Is the verb in verse 12 to be translated 'I am not permitting' (i.e., a temporary restriction) or 'I do not permit' (i.e., a habitual practice)?" (Belleville's question #4) What is the force of Paul "not permitting"? How universal is "permitting"?
7. "Does *to teach* carry official or unofficial connotations?" (Belleville's question #5)
8. What is the meaning of the verb αὐθεντέω in 2:12? Is it "to have authority over" or more negatively "to domineer"?
9. Do the verbs to teach and to have authority/domineer refer to one or to two actions? (Cf. Belleville's question #6.)
10. Do both verbs have to be either positive or negative because of the construction οὐ ... οὐδέ? (Cf. Belleville's question #7.) What implication does the answer to this question have for interpreting the passage?
11. To what extent is Paul writing 2:11-15 to address a particular problem at Ephesus, like heresy, social-disturbance, and/or Artemis cult influence, etc.?
12. Why is the story of Genesis 1-3 used in 1 Tim 2:13-14 to support 2:12? What is communicated and/or implied by this? Is Adam more important since he is "formed first"? Is Eve more flawed in nature than her husband, since she was "deceived"? (Cf. Belleville's questions #8-10.)
13. What is "the childbirth" (ἡ τεκνογονία) in 2:15? Is this a veiled reference to Mary's birth of Jesus? Does it refer only to child-birthing? Or, does it include with this also child-rearing?
14. How will the woman be "saved/delivered/kept safe" (σώζω) through the childbirth in 2:15? (Cf. Belleville's question #11.)
15. Finally, who are the "they" who "continue in faith, love, and holiness with modesty"?

It would be impossible to survey the immense interpretive literature on 1 Tim 2 in a single journal article. What I hope to accomplish, however, is to bring new data to bear on the well-known questions while at the same time correlating such data with important and well-established exegetical findings from a variety of interpretive perspectives.

Integral to any interpretation is the consideration of a proper hermeneutics, i.e. one's interpretive assumptions and approach for studying texts. The approach taken here is inductive, in that I have begun with detailed observations of the underlying structure of the Greek text, which then led me to ask certain questions (such as are provided above) that need answering for the overall interpretation of the passage.<sup>5</sup> Some questions are more difficult and thus more necessary to answer than others. After asking these questions, one's answer to those that can and should be answered is based upon the consideration (collecting and weighing) of evidences, which will here particularly include Greek discourse-pragmatic and social-cultural data. By discourse-pragmatic, I mean the use of the Greek language (pragmatics) to convey meaning through discourse constraints as communicated by conjunctions or their absence (asyndeton), the presence and absence of the article, marked and unmarked word order, and specialized constructions denoting focus, emphasis, and prominence.<sup>6</sup>

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5. I have been influenced by the following works: in general, the Inductive Bible Principles as set forth in Robert A. Traina, *Methodical Bible Study*, repr. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002) and David R. Bauer and Robert A. Traina, *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011); Henry A. Virkler, *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981); and William J. Webb, *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2001).

6. For an introduction to these discourse pragmatic features, see Fredrick J. Long, *Koine Greek Grammar: A Beginning-Intermediate Exegetical and Pragmatic Handbook*, Accessible Greek Resources and Online Studies (Wilmore, KY: GlossaHouse, 2015). Many of these exegetical and pragmatic features were described in and observed throughout 2 Corinthians in Fredrick J. Long, *2 Corinthians: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2015). Both of these works drew especially on the work of Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 2000), Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), and Steven E. Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010).

In this regard, specifically, I have been influenced by the discourse studies of Stephen H. Levinsohn (cited throughout); more generally, I have been influenced by the relevance theory of pragmatics proposed by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, who enumerate that communication is purposeful and efficient, assumes maximum relevance, yet contains explicatures and evokes implicatures to guide audiences to make proper inferences about the meaning of the communication.<sup>7</sup> Critical here is their notion of a Shared Cognitive Environment between communicator and recipient that allows for the communication to be efficient; yet, it is precisely this shared environment for 1 Tim 2 that we don't have ready access to. So, in the absence of this environment, we naturally (and too readily at times) supply our own context and create our own relevance, merging printed (ancient) text with our (modern) culturally located situations. This is quite natural. The problem with this, however, is that we may very well end up being oblivious to the purposeful intent of the original communiqué in its original shared cognitive-cultural environment. Out of respect for the text under interpretation, then, we ought to attempt to understand it on its own terms and not first and foremost on our own terms.

The social-cultural data that I am supplying pertain mainly to how (married) women were viewed, scrutinized, and treated with respect to their social and public roles as wives in relation to their husbands and education. Such an approach differs from typical interpretations of the passage that either ignore such backgrounds or emphasize primarily either the heresy context and the pro-women influence of the Artemis cult, backgrounds that indeed mitigate the injunctions to control women's speech in 2:11-15. However, the influence or relationship of the heresy and the Artemis cult and their ideology of women on 2:11-15 remains uncertain and somewhat speculative; and, even apart from the possible or even likely influence of the heresy and/or the Artemis cult, the admonitions in 2:11-15 are readily understood against the more widespread and established influence of Greek views of married women in relation to their husbands in public social venues and at home. So, although I give some attention to the heresy and the cult of Artemis, this is a minor focus of my presentation, and I think, would only provide a further context in support of the interpretation proposed here.

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7. Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, 2nd ed. (Oxford; Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 2001) and Deirdre Wilson and Dan Sperber, *Meaning and Relevance* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

## BROADER HERMENEUTICAL AND CANONICAL CONSIDERATIONS

At the outset, it may be hermeneutically helpful to consider what Nils Dahl has rightly said, after first quoting Oscar Cullmann speaking of the canonization of the Pauline letters:

‘It was easy to grasp the fact, that Paul had written to a number of Churches.’ It was, however, not equally easy to see why letters written to particular churches on particular occasions should be regarded as canonical and read in all churches. The theological problem raised by the Pauline Epistles was not their plurality but their particularity. As canonicity meant much the same as catholicity, this problem was by no means an imaginary one.<sup>8</sup>

The particularity of Paul’s statements, as he was speaking to and issuing commands to early church assemblies in a variety of and vastly different cultural settings than our own, should give us pause for our immediate and uncritical application and appropriation. This is especially so, given that even Jesus himself must properly contextualize Moses’ statements in Torah “permitting” divorce in Deut 24:1-4 (Matt 19:6-8); Jesus said it should not be so, but that Moses permitted this practice because of the hardness of their hearts. This same verb “to permit” (ἐπιτρέπω) is also found in 1 Tim 2:12 (“I do not permit...”) and in context suggests that the admonition is mitigated (see further below). That Paul’s comments here and elsewhere must be interpreted in social-cultural context then and there, and then evaluated for cultural application here and now can be shown, e.g., in the case of “head coverings” in 1 Cor 11:2-16. A wife’s head covering reflected a social convention in Greco-Roman culture of married women in public: indeed, Bruce Winter has said, “The veil was the most symbolic feature of the bride’s dress in Roman Culture. Plutarch indicated that ‘veiling the bride’ (τὴν νύμφην κατακαλυπτύφαντες) was, in effect, the marriage ceremony” (138D).<sup>9</sup> Winter also rightly questions our contemporary inconsistent application of 1 Tim 2: Why, if we do not prohibit women braiding their hair, wearing gold and pearls, and

8. Nils Dahl, “The Particularity of the Pauline Epistles as a Problem in the Ancient Church,” in *Studies in Ephesians*, ed. D. Hellholm *et al.*; WUNT 131 (Tübingen: Mohr, 2000), 165-78 at 165.

9. Quoted in and discussed by Bruce Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 78.

wearing expensive clothing (2:9), do we selectively enforce the injunction of 2:12 for women not to teach?<sup>10</sup> Indeed. So, then, to the extent that the admonitions in 2:11-15 are either directed to particular social-cultural standards, especially the monitoring and controlling of behaviors of wives, or to contextual problems (like false teaching spreading through poorly educated women or wives), then the injunctions become less normative for all Christian practices in all cultural settings, of course, depending on the particular needs of contemporaneous cultural re-contextualization. The following chart reflects this consideration for appropriation.

To the extent that 2:11-15 addresses ancient social-cultural issues or particular contextual problems, ↓	↔	To the extent 2:11-15 is <b>not</b> addressing ancient social-cultural issues or particular contextual problems, ↓
then the more likely the admonitions contain culture-bound precepts	↔	then the more likely the admonitions contain transcultural principles

My research presented here is prompted by a footnote in an earlier essay, “Christ’s Gifted Bride: Gendered Members in Ministry in Acts and Paul,” that I presented at a Wheaton conference on Women in Ministry.<sup>11</sup> In that essay I argue that Paul’s discussion of God’s gifting of the church in the gift lists evinces no restrictions whatsoever based on gender—they are entirely gender neutral and thus even gender inclusive. Moreover, Paul’s teachings occurred amidst a growing participation rate of women in societal voluntary associations, so that one cannot assume a restricted application and participation to males.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the outpouring of the

11. Fredrick J. Long, “Christ’s Gifted Bride: Gendered Members in Ministry in Acts and Paul,” in *Women, Ministry and the Gospel: Exploring New Paradigms*, ed. Mark Husbands and Timothy Larsen (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), 98–123.

12. In addition to my essay, see especially James M. Arlandson, *Women, Class, and Society in Early Christianity: Models from Luke-Acts* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997). Participation rates were increasing also in diaspora Judaism; see Bernadette J. Brooten, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue: Inscriptional Evidence and Background Issues*, BJS 36 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982).



Holy Spirit in Acts 2 was explained by Peter by quoting Joel 2 that affirms prophesying by both men and women. Importantly, Joel's vision of the Spirit coming and allowing men and women to prophesy was inspired by the event of Moses' requests for leadership assistance and God's sending his Spirit upon these chosen male leaders who prophesied (Num 11:16-30). Prophecy is a leadership gift that consequently the prophet Joel foresaw extending more broadly among God's people—men and women, young and old—that was realized in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Also in this same essay, I made a passing statement, "there are very substantial reasons to think that in 1 Timothy 2:12 Paul is restricting a wife's (public) role in relation to her husband." In a supporting footnote, I provide some preliminary evidence: "the correspondence of 'submission' language with the household codes where wives and husbands are addressed (1 Cor 14:34-35; Eph 5:21-33; Col 3:18; 1 Pet 3:1-7), the change from plural (*women* generally) to singular (a *wife*) at 1 Tim 2:11, Paul's appeal to the creation order and the first married couple (Adam and Eve, the first husband and 'wife') in 1 Tim 2:13-14, and the matter of 'childbearing' in 1 Tim 2:15."

So, at present, I would like to extend my research with more evidence in the form of general social-cultural data to be added to important contextual and discourse-pragmatic considerations. In general, I will not attempt to reconstruct the particular heretical teaching (whether arising from the Artemis cult or elsewhere) that was probably circulating especially among women, but rather more generally to contextualize and thus mitigate Paul's admonition in 2:12. Such attempts have not always been convincing, since they have not adequately answered the function of οὐκ ... οὐδὲ that indicates both "teaching" (διδάσκειν) and "having authority/domineering" (αὐθεντεῖν) must both be positive or negative, and, since "teaching" is never negative, thus "having authority" must be positive and so then Paul is making a generalized admonition (i.e. a transcultural principle and universal application) rather than correcting a problem (i.e. a culture-bound principle and restricted application).<sup>13</sup> However, as I will show, a wife teaching a husband was never acceptable nor was domineering a husband.

## THESIS AND OUTLINE OF THE PAPER

In brief, the interpretation set forth now is this: Paul's not permitting a wife to teach or assume (domineering) authority over a husband was situated

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13. This exegetical discussion is treated in the final section of the paper.



within his concern for evangelistic outreach to all people due to broadly understood conceptions of “proper” social decorum. The major obstacle for this interpretive view has been the common working assumption that Paul gave these directions in the context of “church worship,” as a survey of most modern Bible translations reflects (see chart below). However, such a view ignores the clear, broad societal scope and scale of 2:1-7, which is logically connected to 2:8-15 with an οὖν *therefore*, marking continuity and development.<sup>14</sup> In 2:1-7, we observe a call to prayer for the gospel’s extension both to the broader society and to the fundamental building block of society, the home. Importantly, at the intersection of home and public, the behavior of women was being scrutinized. Such scrutiny was especially directed to religious activities of various kinds; a “new” religious group like the early Christ-followers was not exempt from scrutiny from these mores, but, if anything, was more vulnerable to social stigmatization, if not even suspicion of political subversion. Traditionally, the Romans were suspicious of new cults and their satirists and moralists (like Plutarch and Juvenal) blamed the gullibility of women for the spread of such cults.<sup>15</sup>

This view—that 1 Tim 2 addresses husband and wife—has had a number of supporters dating back to important Medieval translations of the 13th and 14th centuries, and Martin Luther’s in the 16th century.<sup>16</sup> Robert Young in his literal translation (1898, 3rd ed.) indicates the marriage relationship: “a woman I do not suffer to teach, nor to rule a husband.”<sup>17</sup> The grammarians Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor state regarding ἄνδρός in 2:12 “*her husband*, though anarthrous.”<sup>18</sup> More recently we can add interpreters E. Earle Ellis, Sharon H. Gritz, Gordon

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14. Runge, *Discourse Grammar*, 43-48, 57 and Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 65.

15. Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women & Wives: Marriage and Women’s Ministry in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 139-42.

16. A review and discussion is found in Leland Edward Wilshire, *Insight into Two Biblical Passages: The Anatomy of a Prohibition: I Timothy 2:12, the TLG Computer, and the Christian Church; the Servant City: The Servant Songs of Isaiah 40-66 and the Fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC/BCE* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), 69, 78-79.

17. Robert Young, *Young’s Literal Translation*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1898). I could not determine if this third edition was the same as the first edition in 1862.

18. *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1979), 630; cited by Hugenerberger, “Women in Church Office,” 353 n.54.

P. Hugenberg, B. Ward Powers, Philip Towner, and Bruce W. Winter.<sup>19</sup> So, this interpretation is not new, nor conditioned by current feministic hermeneutics, even if such might be deemed negative by some evaluators.<sup>20</sup>

Philip Towner presents a nuanced, yet equivocating, position by simultaneously describing “woman/wife” and “man/husband” (or the like), while understanding that husbands and wives are primarily in view beginning at 2:8.<sup>21</sup> For this reason, I mention Towner here in support of husbands/wives, but also because he directs interpreters in two other helpful directions. First, he acknowledges Paul’s broader concern for Christian social respectability by maintaining decorum for evangelistic witness; and second, he takes seriously and attempts to integrate Bruce Winter’s proposal of the emergence of the “new woman” in the first century that caused social disruption and raised concerns among governing authorities, Greco-Roman moralists, and the apostle Paul. Thus, we must take seriously Towner’s conclusion as he moves to consider the application of the passage:

If the teaching of 1 Tim 2:11-15 is set properly within the broader frame that includes vv.8-10, then the public dimension of the circumstances is more easily seen. If, moreover, the teaching is set equally within the discourse initiated at 2:1, from which point Paul’s mission and the church’s participation within it (see also v.8) assumes a place of priority within his treatment of community matters, then the public nature of the instructions to wives/women

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19. Apart from Ellis, Powers, and Winters, I am generally drawing this list from Gordon P. Hugenberg, “Women in Church Office: Hermeneutics or Exegesis? A Survey of Approaches to 1 Tim 2:8-15,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 35, no. 3 (1992): 341–60 at 350–51. E. Earle Ellis, *Pauline Theology: Ministry and Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 67–78; Sharon H. Gritz, *Paul, Women Teachers, and the Mother Goddess at Ephesus: A Study of 1 Timothy 2:9–15 in Light of the Religious and Cultural Milieu of the First Century* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991); B. Ward Powers, *The Ministry of Women in the Church: Which Way Forward?* (Adelaide: SPCK, 1996), ch.2; Winter, *Roman Wives*, ch.6.

20. Indeed, Hugenberg indicates, “The reason for indicating something of the earlier pedigree of this approach is to help safeguard it against the charge that it is merely an accommodation to late-twentieth-century societal pressures in favor of ‘women’s liberation’” (“Women in Church Office,” 350 n.39).

21. Towner, *Letters*, 201.

reflects a mission and witness coloration.<sup>22</sup>

A problem exists, however, in that Towner falters in his interpretation of 2:12 due an inconsistency, because he takes Paul's not permitting a wife to teach a man within a worship setting context, despite recognizing that the reference to submission there is related to the language of the house code relations, which would then delimit the referents to a wife in relation to a husband.<sup>23</sup>

In the remainder of this article, I would like to set forth foundational perspectives for interpreting 2:11-15, attempting to work evidentially from discourse-pragmatic observations from the Greek text and by reconstructing a broader social-cultural context that would have been a part of the shared cognitive environment informing 1 Tim 2. These perspectives will include:

1. The Missional Context of 1 Tim 2:1-7 as not Restricted to a Christian Worship Setting;
2. The Social Respectability of Believers;
3. Social-Cultural-Religious Views of Men as Husbands and Women as Wives; and
4. The Evidence for a Wife in relation to a Husband in 2:11-15.

With this information, I will conclude by providing a translation and a brief discussion of the oft-debated aspects of 2:11-15 and how these foundational perspectives provide a fairly simple and consistent reading of these verses.

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22. Towner, *Letters*, 237. This statement occurs in Towner's opening remarks concerning "Methodology and Application" (236-39).

23. Towner falters in relation to the meaning of "in all submission" (ἐν ᾧ ὑποταγῇ), acknowledging its relation to the house code tradition, but then (oddly) concluding: "Its application in the present context is something of an adaptation of the tradition, however, since it is not the wife's submission to the husband that is in view (cf. 1 Cor 14:34), but rather her submission either to the instructor or generally the instructional setting" (*Letters*, 215; cf. 212). See also 216, where it is clear that Towner understands the teaching setting "in the worship assembly" or "in the worship setting" (n.68).

## THE MISSIONAL CONTEXT OF 1 TIM 2:1-7 AS NOT RESTRICTED TO A CHRISTIAN WORSHIP SETTING

One of the first hurdles for our interpretation of 1 Tim 2 is the uninspired, interpretive sectional titles that most recent English translations place within the biblical text. Included below are the most common translations and the titles they supply.

Version	Text Span	Title
KJV, AV 1873, Darby 1890, ASV 1901, RSV 1971	2:1-15	[none]
NKJV 1982	2:1-7	Pray for All Men
	2:8-15	Men and Women in the Church
NIV 1984, 2011	2:1-15	Instructions on Worship
NRSV 1989	2:1-15	Instructions concerning Prayer
Good News 1992	2:1-15	Church Worship
NASB 1995	2:1-8	A Call to Prayer
	2:9-15	Women Instructed
ISV 2000	2:1-15	Prayer and Submission to Authority
ESV 2001	2:1-15	Pray for All People
NET 2006	2:1-8	Prayer for All People
	2:9-15	Conduct of Women
New Century Version 2005	2:1-15	Some Rules for Men and Women
Holman Christian Bible 2009	2:1-7	Instructions on Prayer
	2:8-15	Instructions to Men and Women
NLT 2013	2:1-15	Instructions about Worship

Especially problematic are titles that are unjustified by discourse considerations. For example, Stephen H. Levinsohn comments that titles should be avoided “where the argument continues” and includes 2:8 as one such place; instead, justification for a title exist for 1:3, 12; 2:1; 3:1

etc.<sup>24</sup> Most unhelpful are those titles that restrict the context to Worship and/or that generalize the materials to be about Men and Women more broadly (in **grey highlight**).<sup>25</sup> Instead of uncritically being directed by these headings, we need to understand the argumentative progression of 1 Tim 2 in order to observe the major themes and movements of 2:1-15 and so arrive at a more accurate “heading” for the material. I hope to demonstrate that 2:1-15 is not restricted to a worship setting, but rather envisages a broader missional context with an acute concern for social respectability for the sake of effective witness.

First, the recurrences of *πᾶς* indicate a broad, inclusive scope especially at the beginning of 1 Tim 2.<sup>26</sup>

v.1a “I exhort foremost of **all** [*πρῶτον πάντων*]...”<sup>27</sup>

v.1b “petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for **all** persons [*ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀνθρώπων*]”

v.2a “for kings and **all** that are in authority” (*ὑπὲρ βασιλέων καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐν ὑπεροχῇ ὄντων*)

v.2b in order that we would live a tranquil and quiet life in **all** godliness and reverence [*ἐν πᾶσιν εὐσεβείᾳ καὶ σεμνότητι*].”

v.4 God “desires **all** persons to be saved” (*πάντας ἀνθρώπους θέλει σωθῆναι*).

v.6 Christ is “the one that gave himself as a ransom for **all**” (*ὁ δοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων*)

v.8 Paul wants “the men to pray in **every** place” (*προσεύχεσθαι τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ*)

v.11 Paul wants a woman/wife to learn “in **all** submission” (*ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ*)

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24. Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Some Notes on the Information Structure and Discourse Features of 1 Timothy* (Dallas: SIL International, 2009), 4. Levinsohn understands 2:1-7 and 2:8-15 to be sections (3).

25. Most problematical are the NASB95 and NET, which single out instructions for the conduct of women in 2:8-15, as opposed to men, which may reflect and perpetuate the mistaken male interest to control women’s behavior.

26. In support of this broad scale, we could also add from v.7 Paul’s identity and purpose to be “herald, apostle, and...teacher of the nations” (*κῆρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος ... διδάσκαλος ἐθνῶν*).]

27. William Mounce’s translation captures the significance well: “above everything else” (*Pastoral Epistles*, WBC 46, [Dallas: Word, 2000], 78).

I. Howard Marshall correctly summarizes: “In vv.1-7 the need for prayer is inculcated and stress is laid on its universal scope, embracing all kinds of people. Then follows an extended justification based on the implications of the gospel.”<sup>28</sup>

Second, structurally 2:1-15 moves from broad and general scope to particular scope, from social organization at the broadest scale of “all people,” “kings and all in authority” (2:1-2, 4) to the smallest scale and entry point of social organization, “the bearing of children” (2:15). Now, a logical step is needed before arriving at children, namely, the existence of a husband-wife relationship, which I argue is present in 2:11-15 and possibly even beginning as early as 2:8-10.

Third, the οὖν in 2:1 reflects an underlying information structure so that 2:1-15 continues and develops the main theme-line found at 1:18-19a located prior to the digression of 1:19b-20.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, in 1:18-19a Paul makes a generalizing statement about entrusting “this instruction” (Ταύτην τὴν παραγγελίαν) to Timothy, which anaphorically recalls an earlier use of the cognate verb in 1:3, and especially the same noun as is defined in 1:5: “the goal of the instruction is this: love from a pure heart and a good conscience and an un-hypocritical faith” (τὸ δὲ τέλος τῆς παραγγελίας ἐστὶν ἀγάπη ἐκ καθαρᾶς καρδίας καὶ συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς καὶ πίστεως ἀνυποκρίτου). The intervening elaborative material in 1:6-17 works to show both the real (possible) context of unfaithfulness (1:6-11) but then also shows in 1:12 the faithfulness of God to establish Paul as “faithful for ministry” (πιστόν με ἡγήσατο θέμενος εἰς διακονίαν). Paul himself thus exemplifies receiving love and faith in Christ Jesus, who came into the world to save sinners, among whom Paul was the worst (1:15); Jesus’ entering into the world to save sinners is explained: “the word is faithful, worthy of all acceptance.” The fronting of the genitive “all acceptance” before “worthy” (πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος) “emphasises the

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28. Marshall, *Pastorals*, 415. Problematic, however, is Marshall’s view in his next sentence: “A fresh start is made with a statement of the moral requirements for prayer first in respect of men (v.8) and then (v.9) in respect of women; the two are treated as separate categories, which must reflect something about the relationships within the church.” The οὖν *therefore* initiating vv.8-10 and the continued themes of prayer and ethical conduct indicate clearly that these verses precisely are not a “fresh start.”

29. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of 1 Timothy*, 10.

extent to which the word should be accepted.”<sup>30</sup> The quantitative emphasis on “all” here should also be noted, since it further underscores the need for *complete* acceptance.<sup>31</sup> So, if 2:1 resumes the main theme-line in 1:18-19a and Paul’s instruction to Timothy, such instruction concerns urging followers of Christ to good character and faithfulness in view of Christ’s mission to save sinners.

In 2:1 this ethical-missional context is carried forward with Paul’s exhortation (Παρακαλῶ) that all manner of prayer be made “for all people, for kings and all that are in authority, that [ἵνα] we would live a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and reverence” (2:1b-2). Emphasis attends this prayer, apart from the natural prominence of describing the social-religious interface of humanity and the Divine, since four types of prayers are abutted in 2:1: δεήσεις προσευχὰς ἐντεύξεις εὐχαριστίας. This list of “supplications, prayers, requests, thanksgivings” with no intervening conjunctions “produces a vivid and impassioned effect.”<sup>32</sup> Verse 3 is connected with asyndeton and an evaluative verbless clause of what is “good and acceptable” (καλὸν καὶ ἀπόδεκτον) before God.<sup>33</sup> Verse 4 contains a non-restrictive continuative-descriptive relative pronoun clause that elaborates God’s will to save all people and bring them to “a knowledge of the truth.” Verses 5-6 contain a creedal affirmation of God as Savior, the One God, and the One mediator between God and Humanity,<sup>34</sup> the person Christ Jesus who gave himself as “a ransom for all people,” which is “the timely testimony” (τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῦς ἰδίους). Verse 7 then concludes by elaborating on this testimony with a non-restrictive continuative-descriptive relative pronoun clause that highlights Paul’s missionary roles of “herald and apostle” with the emphatic subject pronoun ἐγὼ and then

30. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of 1 Timothy*, 8. Levinsohn directs readers to his *Self-Instruction Materials on Non-Narrative Discourse Analysis* (Dallas: SIL International, 2011), §5.6. For discussions and examples of fronted genitival emphasis, see Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 78, 98, 129, 130, 235, 288.

31. For an extensive discussion on quantitative emphasis, see Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 221-23.

32. BDF §460. For asyndeton and polysyndeton and the interpretation of lists, see Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 281-86.

33. Evaluation is one possible significance of asyndeton (Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 119-20; Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 281).

34. Such affirmations are counter-Imperial. See Malcolm Gill, *Jesus as Mediator: Politics and Polemic in 1 Timothy 2:1-7* (Oxford; New York: Peter Lang, 2008).



a sentence end, final emphatic appositional statement, “a teacher of the nations in faith and truth” (διδάσκαλος ἐθνῶν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀληθείᾳ);<sup>35</sup> this final affirmation is preceded and offset by a metacomment “I speak the truth; I do not lie” probably as “a slowing-down device to highlight this final constituent.”<sup>36</sup> In 2:1-7, the constituents “a tranquil and quiet life” (ἡρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον, 2:2b), “all people” (2:4a), and “to a knowledge of the truth” (2:4b), and “truth” (2:7b) have been preposed (i.e., placed before their respective verbs) for “focal prominence.”<sup>37</sup>

Next, in 2:8 the connective οὖν marks new development with continuity between 2:1-7 and 2:8-15. We observe Paul’s role as herald, apostle, and teacher enacted in his disclosing his will (βούλομαι, “I want”) for the conduct of the men/husbands (2:8) and the women/wives (2:9-10). Some question exists what exactly Paul “likewise also” wanted of the women, although the elliptical grammar would have us only to resupply βούλομαι to be complemented by the infinitive κοσμεῖν “to adorn” and not to resupply the whole of βούλομαι προσεύχεσθαι “I want them to pray,” which is too difficult grammatically.<sup>38</sup> On the one hand, apart from the initial orienter βούλομαι, there are no remarkable aspects of word order in Paul’s exhortations to the men/husbands at 2:8; normal word order obtains. However, there is quantitative emphasis in the phrase “in every place”; also, the description of “uplifted holy hands” appeals to broad social practices. On the other hand, Paul’s extended exhortation for women in 2:9-10 shows significant discourse-pragmatic features, including focal prominent word order in 2:9b (the preposing of “with decency and propriety”) and the point/counterpoint set of μή ... ἀλλά “not . . . but” emphasizing its final constituent “through good deeds” (δι’ ἔργων ἀγαθῶν), which is set off and highlighted by the prior non-restrictive continuative-descriptive relative pronoun clause (“which is proper for women making a claim to godliness”); thus prominence attends these good deeds, which also stand in

35. On the discourse pragmatic significance of appositional emphasis, emphatic subject pronouns, non-restrictive continuative-descriptive relative pronoun clauses, and metacomments, see respectively Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 99-100, 168-69, 173-74, 196-97, and the sources cited in these discussions.

36. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of 1 Timothy*, 10-11.

37. Ibid, 10.

38. Contra, e.g., Ben Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians: Vol. 1 A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy, and 1-3 John* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 224.

a final sentence position.<sup>39</sup> It should be pointed out here that the virtuous behavior of decency, propriety, godliness, and good works are socially and broadly recognized virtues (see further below).

After reviewing 2:1-10, we should ask, What indications exist that Paul intends a restricted location of concern to Christian Worship or a church setting? I don't see any whatsoever.<sup>40</sup> The one item that interpreters will point to is Paul's statement in 2:8 "for the men/husbands to pray in **every** place" (προσεύχεσθαι τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ). However, this expression is found elsewhere in Paul only three times, each with a clear sense of missionary or evangelistic import:

- 1 Thess 1:8 "The word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia but also in every place your faith towards God has gone out, so that I have no need to say anything" (NASB95).
- 1 Cor 1:2b "called saints, which all that are calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in very place..." [We must note that Paul wants the Corinthians to think of the gospel spreading to others throughout the epistle; see esp. 14:36; cf. 2 Cor 10]
- 2 Cor 2:14 "God...is triumphing...and manifesting through us a knowledge of Christ in every place."

J. N. D. Kelly rightly considers this phrase ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ "in every place" to be a technical term for Paul to mean "wherever the gospel is preached" and relates the statement to that found in Mal 1:11:<sup>41</sup> "For from the rising of the sun even to its setting, My name *will be* great among the nations, and in every place [וּבְכָל-מְקוֹם] incense is going to be offered to My

39. In support of the focal prominence and final highlighting, see Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of 1 Timothy*, 11. On point/counterpoint sets, see Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 83 and the sources cited there.

40. Indeed, J. M. Holmes, investigating Paul's explicit purpose statements with ἵνα in 1:18 (that Paul's exhorts Timothy to fight the good fight) and 3:15 ("that you know how one must behave oneself in the household of God"), rightly concludes: "Neither stated goal limits the context to worship or prayer meetings" (*Text in a Whirlwind: A Critique of Four Exegetical Devices at 1 Timothy 2.9-15*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 196 [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000], 50).

41. J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles: I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus*, Black's New Testament commentaries (London: A. & C. Black, 1963), 65.

name, and a grain offering *that is* pure; for My name *will be* great among the nations,” says the LORD of hosts” (NASB95).

So, in 2:1-10 we certainly have praying occurring, but we must acknowledge that the prayer is focused to support God’s knowledge of God’s salvation in Jesus Christ spreading to all people. There are many instances in the NT where praying takes place in a variety of locations, not even primarily in a (formal) church worship setting.<sup>42</sup> Taken together, then, we can conclude that 1 Tim 2 is framed by a concern for evangelistic-missional outreach in broad societal perspective to save all persons.

## THE SOCIAL AND ETHICAL RESPECTABILITY OF BELIEVERS

Part and parcel with this mission, moreover, is Paul’s description of the goal of the prayer, namely in 2:2, the community’s peaceableness and quietness in view of rulers and authorities. Additionally, in 2:8-10 Paul’s description of the husband’s/men’s prayer and conduct and the wives’/women’s appearance and conduct both reflect ***broadly-held social virtues*** of Paul’s day. This has been well-documented, described, and summarized in commentaries and specialized studies. Commenting on 2:2, Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann rightly conclude that believers “should live a peaceable and quiet life” (ἡρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον διάγωμεν) “is described in terms which, to be sure, stand out as peculiar in the context of the NT, but which are frequently used in the environment of early

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42. Jesus encouraged praying in secret (the Lord’s prayer), perhaps even in the water closet (Matt 6:6); Jesus was praying while being baptized at the Jordan (Luke 3:21); he was praying in the wilderness (Mark 1:35) and on a mountain (Luke 9:29); the disciples are praying in Gethsemane (Matt 26:41) and at the temple during the prayer hour (Acts 3:1). Jesus also anticipates the disciples to be praying “whenever” (ὅταν, Mark 11:25) and “at all times” (πάντοτε [Luke 18:1]; ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ [21:36]). Cornelius “was praying to God continually” (δεόμενος τοῦ θεοῦ διὰ παντός, Acts 10:2). Paul prays at a house possibly alone (Acts 9:11) as does Peter (Acts 11:5). Paul went to a riverside looking for a place of prayer (Acts 16:13) and prays and sings hymns in prison (16:25). It is likely, although not specified, that Paul was praying as “his spirit was provoked” walking through Athens and observing all the idols. Prayer occurs on a beach at Paul’s departure (Acts 21:5). Certainly, corporate “church” praying occurred regularly in houses (Acts 1:14; 2:42; 6:6; 12:12) but also for special needs and occasions (4:31; 8:15, 22; 9:40; 12:5; 20:36). However, praying seems to be a continuous practice anywhere expected of ministers (Acts 6:4). To this brief summary, we should remember Paul’s example and admonitions about continuously praying (1 Thess 5:18; Eph 6:18; Col 1:3; 4:2; Phil 4:6; 1 Tim 5:5). So, we should not envision a (formal) worship setting at every mention of praying.

Christianity.”<sup>43</sup> The assertion here about the “peculiarity” is problematic, since similar notions are found in 1 Thess 4:11-12; 2 Thess 3:11-12 (cf. Eph 4:28; 1 Pet 4:14-16). Nevertheless, the broad environment is well documented by Dibelius and Conzelmann. So too, concerning 2:2 these interpreters say, “‘Piety’ (εὐσέβεια) and ‘dignity’ (σεμνότης) are obviously intended to illustrate the ideal of good, honorable citizenship...”<sup>44</sup> Likewise, regarding Paul’s admonitions to women in 2:9, Gary G. Hoag can summarize: “the consensus reads 1 Tim 2:9 as consistent with Jewish moralists and respecting Roman codes for female decorum.”<sup>45</sup>

In 2:8, Paul’s desire for the men/husbands to lift up “holy hands” (ὁσίους χεῖρας) contains a peculiar adjective ὁσιος. BDAG (728), even before offering its first definition, explains the social import of this adjective: “In the Gr-Rom. world this term [ὁσιος] for the most part described that which helps maintain the delicate balance between the interests of society and the expectations of the transcendent realm.” Although interpreters commonly indicate (with good scriptural support) that praying with hands uplifted was one Jewish posture for prayer which may indicate a worship setting,<sup>46</sup> to raise “holy hands” actually represented a broader Hellenistic idiom, since “‘Holy hands’ (ὅσιοι χεῖρες) in the Greek tragedians are hands which are ritually pure.”<sup>47</sup> The Roman philosopher Seneca in *Naturales Questiones* 3.Praef.14 (c. AD 63) speaks of “lifting pure hands to heaven” (*puras ad caelum manus tollere*) as part of an extended response to the question, “What is the Principle thing to do?”; Josephus describes

43. Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 38–39.

44. *Ibid.*, 39.

45. Gary G. Hoag, “Decorum and Deeds in 1 Timothy 2:9-10 in Light of Ephesiaca by Xenophon of Ephesus,” *Ex Auditu* 27 (2011): 134–60 at 146. Hoag also argues that Paul’s admonitions for the women is particularly appropriate in the environs of Ephesus, since women in cultic attire or otherwise associated with Artemis were identified with the particular negative attributes (adornment, braided hair, and gold) and positive virtues (godliness, piety, and good deeds) as recounted in the literary work of Xenophon of Ephesus, *Ephesiaca*, which Hoag argues may be dated to the first century CE; he argues, “Nearly every word in 1 Tim 2:9-10 appears in *Ephesiaca*” (154).

46. See, e.g. Marshall, *Pastorals*, 445; Raymond F. Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: A Commentary*, The New Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 65–66.

47. Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 44 n.2.

Abraham's petition to the Lord against Pharaoh to involve lifting hands to God (*BJ* 5.380); see also 1 *QS* 9.15.<sup>48</sup>

In the (public) inscriptions, the lifting up of hands may be associated with cursing and prayers of vengeance. (One wonders whether such would be unholy hands.) At Delos, one reads, "Theogenes ... against unholiness raises the hands to Helios and the holy goddess" (Θεογένης κατ' ἀναγίου αἶρει τὰς χεῖρας τῷ Ἡλίῳ καὶ τῇ ἁγνῇ θεᾷ) to begin to curse a woman who had defrauded him (*ID* 2531.1-4).<sup>49</sup> On the neighboring Island Rheneia, a double-sided Jewish inscription dating to about 100 BC calls for vengeance on the murderer of two Jewish young ladies. The marble stele (shown below) remarkably depicts raised hands calling upon God's assistance to avenge.<sup>50</sup> The inscription was a public display calling for divine justice.



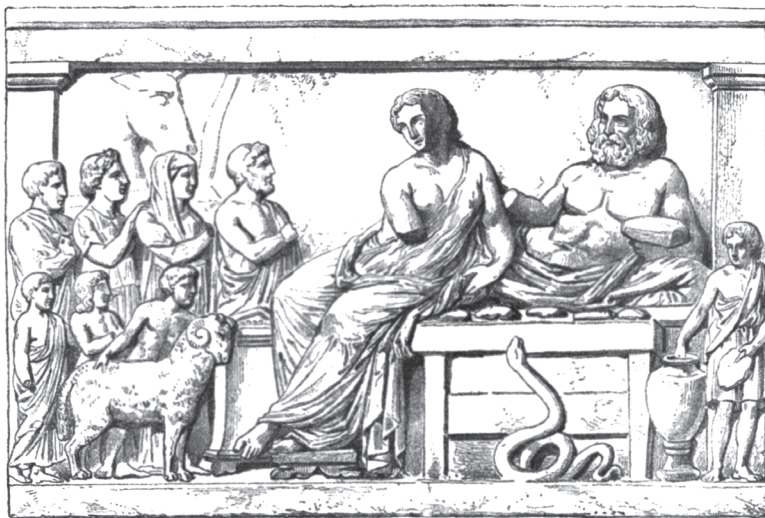
48. These references were found in H. Balz, "ὄσιος" *EDNT* 2:536.

49. Adolf Wilhelm, "Zwei Fluchinschriften," *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes in Wien* 4 Supplement (1901): cols. 9–18.

50. For a thorough discussion of dating and origins, see Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East the New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World*, 2nd ed., trans. and Lionel Richard Mortimer Strachan, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1910), 423–35. The image is from 424.



Additionally, the raising of hands reflects a broader societal practice that is seen in other settings. For example, the raising of both hands in prayer is a type scene on Greek votive reliefs, reflecting the worshipper's awe and respect towards deity. A votive relief dating to the 4th century BC from Karystos, Greece, shows a "woman venerating Dionysos and Ploutos, raising both hands in prayer (Chalkis, Museum 337)."<sup>51</sup> A similar scene is found as a family of worshippers approaches the god Asklepeios and his daughter Hygieia who recline eating, with the snake below Asklepeios, his calling card.<sup>52</sup> This relief is located inside a church building at Merbaka near Argos in the Peloponnese. It is an ex-voto scene where supplicants offer sacrifices to fulfill a vow, here a ram sacrifice. The supplicants of family members have hands slightly raised as sign of adoration or prayer (προσεύχη), a word commonly used in the GNT (including 1 Tim 2:1) and cognate to the verb προσεύχομαι found in 1 Tim 2:8.



So, returning to 1 Tim 2, this passage should be interpreted as relating to the larger Christian mission, the proclamation of the gospel to all people. John P. Dickson, investigating *Mission-Commitment in Ancient Judaism*

51. Anja Klöckner, "Getting in Contact: Concepts of Human-Divine Encounter in Classical Greek Art," in *The Gods of Ancient Greece Identities and Transformations*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer and Andrew Erskine, Edinburgh Leventis Studies 5 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 106–25 at 110–11.

52. The image and description has been edited from Victor Duruy, *History of Greece, and of the Greek People, from the Earliest Times to the Roman Conquest*, trans. M. M. Ripley, vol. I, sect. II (Boston: Estes and Lauriat, 1890), 417 and are also further described in Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 360.

and in the Pauline Communities, demonstrates that the Pauline Epistles in numerous places speak of missionary praying (1 Thess 5:25; 2 Thess 3:1; Rom 10:1; Col 4:2-4; Eph 6:19-20; 1 Tim 2:1-10) and encourage attractive behavior for the sake of an “ethical apologetic,” that is, behavior that is becoming and winsome to outsiders (1 Thess 4:11-12; Col 4:5; Phil 4:5; Titus 2:3-10; 3:1-8).<sup>53</sup> Dickson concludes his study of these passages, saying,

it is clear that ‘ethical apologetic’ formed a significant part of Pauline parenesis not simply in his letters but in his foundational instructions also (1 Thess 4:11-12). In Paul’s view, Christians were to be cognizant of the fact that they lived in full view of an unbelieving society and, thus, were to strive for a morally ‘good appearance’ before that audience.... Thus, the ‘wise’ and ‘attractive’ lifestyle of believers was to perform a missionary function.<sup>54</sup>

In other words, in 1 Tim 2, Paul was merging prayer for missionary evangelism with a concern for social decorum and respectability, as reflected elsewhere in the Pauline corpus. Thus, a better heading (if we need one) for 1 Tim 2:1-15 would be “Prayer and Instructions for Missional Living.”

## SOCIAL-CULTURAL-RELIGIOUS VIEWS OF MEN AS HUSBANDS AND WOMEN AS WIVES

At this point we need to consider a significant aspect of 1 Tim 2, namely, the shared cognitive environment regarding gender roles in the Mediterranean world, especially centered in Greece and Asia Minor. What social-cultural climate existed such that Paul would be so concerned about the men’s or husbands’ activities and the women’s or wives’ activities? What is the shared cognitive environment that informs 1 Tim 2? Let me briefly describe six aspects of gender expectations, customs, and practices that would enforce and perpetuate them.

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53. John P. Dickson, *Mission-Commitment in Ancient Judaism and in the Pauline Communities: The Shape, Extent and Background of Early Christian Mission*, WUNT 2/159 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 216-19, in which Dickson discusses 1 Tim 2:1-10. Dickson should have spent more time explicating the ethical apologetic of this passage, which is limited to very brief comments in his conclusion (292).

54. Dickson, *Mission-Commitment*, 290-91.



First, the household was generally understood as the foundational political unit of the society; thus safeguards existed for proper maintenance of it (see also further below). Thus, it was understood, “as goes the family, so goes society.”<sup>55</sup> This awareness explains why Paul and Peter, as they describe in broader terms the Christian gospel and the formation and identity of the people of God (1 Peter 2; Eph 1:1–5:14), nevertheless will further relate the Christian community members to the broader society and its kings and authorities (Eph 3:7–9; 6:10–12; Titus 3:1–11; 1 Pet 2:11–17) but then also address matters of the Christian household: husband/wife, parent/child, slave/master or social roles by age/gender (Eph 5:15–6:9; Titus 2; Pet 2:11–3:12). This same movement is observed in 1 Tim 2 and then in its latter chapters.

Second, persons generally were zealous to maintain decorum and proper distinctions among inhabitants of cities. Riet van Bremen summarizes, “In both its male and female versions the ‘ideal’ citizen was, as M. Worrle has memorably described him, a ‘Polisfanatiker’ whose every effort, including his wealth, was at the service of his fellow citizens.”<sup>56</sup> So, genders and ages (men, boys, women, and girls) were distinguished in public. Riet van Bremen summarizes:

In Hellenistic cities divisions within the family extended into the public sphere. The ideology of equality and solidarity, which dominated male civic behaviour and which emerged from a political tradition that gave a central decision-making role to the assembly of male citizens, strongly affected the public *personae* of women and the young. In the public sphere households re-grouped themselves along lines of gender and age, forming

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55. Cicero said, “the deterioration of the State by means of boundless freedoms results in the home not having a master, and father fearing sons, old men stooping to the games of the youth for fear of being too serious, wives having the same rights as husbands, and many other evils” (*De Res Publica* I.67). Correspondingly, Musonius Rufus said, “...it would be each man’s duty to take thought for his own city, and to make of his home a rampart for its protection. But the first step toward making his home a rampart is marriage. Whoever destroys human marriage destroys the home, the city, and the whole human race” (XIV); quoted from Raymond A. Belliotti, *Roman Philosophy and the Good Life* (Lanham, MA; Lexington, 2009), 200–201.

56. Riet van Bremen, “Family Structures,” in *A Companion to the Hellenistic World*, ed. Andrew Erskine, Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World: Ancient History (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 313–30 at 328

in a certain sense a collective family of citizens. For civic purposes, families dissolved into collectives of men (*neoi*: young men, formed a separate and important group), women (referred to as *gynaikes* or *politides*), boys of different ages (*paides*: young boys, *epheboi*: boys in their upper teens) and unmarried girls (*parthenoi*). This functional separation affected office-holding, including religious office-holding, and gave structure to civic and religious ritual and to the acculturation and education of (future) citizens.<sup>57</sup>

Third, *gynaikonomoi* “controllers of women” and similar magistracies were ubiquitous in Greek Mediterranean cities. Aristotle described the existence of various magistrate positions to help retain gender and social distinctions. Their provenance extended as far south as Alexandria, as far west as Syracuse, and as far north as Thasos in the Northern Aegean sea.<sup>58</sup> Bremen summarizes:

Aristotle, in the *Politics*, does indeed describe the *gynaikonomos*, together with the *paidonomos* and ‘other magistracies exercising similar supervisory functions’...; he also lists the *gynaikonomia* with the *paidonomia*, *nomophylakia* and *gymnasiarchia* under the heading of magistracies that ‘are concerned with *eukosmia* (good order, decorum) and specific to cities that have a certain amount of leisure and wealth’ (*Pol.* 1300a4; 1322b39; 1323a4).<sup>59</sup>

And,

In our period, these magistracies had developed from being specific only to certain types of cities to being virtually ubiquitous and characteristic of cities’ concern with acculturating the young and with guarding the public decorum and moral integrity of those groups that were deemed to be in need of supervision precisely because they were essential to the integrity of the citizen body as

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57. Riet van Bremen, “Family Structures,” 322.

58. Daniel Ogden, *Greek Bastardy in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 366.

59. Bremen, “Family Structures,” 323.

a whole.<sup>60</sup>

Of particular interest here is the role of the *gynaikonomos*. Daniel Ogden in his “Appendix: *Gynaikonmoi*, ‘Controllers of Women’” offers a survey of the evidence, the distribution of this magistrate, and the kinds of roles the *gynakionomos* had:<sup>61</sup>

1. They policed women’s dress and legitimate participation of girls at festivals, e.g., properly distinguishing married from unmarried women and the number of feasters.

2. They policed mourning at funerals, which was normally conducted by women, involving clothing (grey color), cleanliness, and the duration of mourning. However, they may have curbed the womanly behavior of men at funerals (by their excessive mourning).

3. They controlled the women’s exiting of the home; the rules varied slightly, but generally the women were not to go out at night (unless they were going to commit adultery) and were not to travel alone, but could be escorted by female slaves.

4. They regulated their morality and appearances in public, making sure proper distinctions were made between initiated and uninitiated to the mystery cult, married women and young girls, and slave-women. Foremost, however, was making sure women were not too alluringly attractive: “jewellery, rouge, face-powder, hair-bands, plaited hair, shoes, and diaphanous clothes are banned....”<sup>62</sup> They were particularly concerned with proper order (κόσμος and κοσμος and κοσμέω); these latter two words occur in 1 Tim 2: “At Syracuse the *gynaikonmoi* policed regulations that forbade women to wear gold ornaments, garments embroidered with flowers, or robes with purple borders, unless they professed they were prostitutes.”<sup>63</sup>

5. They (may have) regulated the amount of feasting generally, not just among women, although this may have been unique to Syracuse.

6. They were concerned with “the curbing of womanish behavior in men” perhaps beyond the funeral in 2nd CE Chaeronea.<sup>64</sup>

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60. Ibid., 324.

61. Ogden, *Greek Bastardy*, 364–76. Cf. Winter, *Roman Wives*, 85.

62. Ogden, “Appendix: *Gynaikonmoi*,” 371.

63. Ibid., 370.

64. Ibid., 373.



Ogden concludes by reflecting on the complementary role of the *gynaikonomoi* (attending especially to women) and other magistrates overseeing men and boys. There may have been some relation of the *gynaikonomoi* and the *kosmophylakes* (“keepers of social order”) described at Cyzicus (the leading city in northern Mysia) in the 1st century BC and 1st century AD. At Athens in the first century CE, married couples had “to register ‘the completion of their marriages’ with the *kosmophylax*” either for record keeping or for registering legitimate children who could enter officially into the citizenry. Some relation, too, may exist with “the magistrate set over the good order [εὐκοσμία] of virgins” that existed at Pergamum and at Smyrna.<sup>65</sup>

However, the fourth aspect of gender expectations and customs in the first century (BC and AD), in spite of carefully watching women and wives and attempting to control their behavior as described just above, was “a feminist movement” (to risk anachronism) of the new woman. This phenomenon is well described by Bruce Winter in his book, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003). There were various social and/or legal responses to this phenomenon. Among moralists, there was disdain and censor, appealing to traditions of modesty. As far as legislation, in order to promote progeny and strengthen family cohesion the emperor Augustus enacted a law that encouraged the bearing of children, chastity within marriage, and granted inheritance rights for wives.<sup>66</sup>

Fifth, the influence of the Artemis Cult likely affected women’s attitudes and conduct towards apparel, marriage, and childbearing. Lynn R. LiDonnici summarizes,

Nearly all of the roles of Artemis of Ephesus suggest that the goddess could be understood as the legitimate wife of the city of Ephesus itself: protectress and nourisher; ‘trustworthy warden’ not only of the things in people’s houses, but also of the financial resources on deposit at the Artemision; guardian of legitimate marriage; overseer of the birth of the next generation, *κουροτρόφος*. These are categories of power, intimately connected with the stability and continuation of the family, the city, the empire, and,

65. Ibid., 373-75.

66. See Judith Evans Grubbs, *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire a Sourcebook on Marriage, Divorce and Widowhood* (New York: Routledge, 2002), esp. ch.2.

conceptually, the universe.”<sup>67</sup>

Diodorus Siculus also identified Artemis of Ephesus as *κουροτρόφος* *the nursing mother* or *child rearer* (5.73.5).<sup>68</sup> Sharon H. Gritz summarizes, “Artemis had a special concern with the loss of virginity and with childbearing. Maidens of marriageable age did certain honors to Artemis. Women in travail called on her for aid.”<sup>69</sup>

Sixth, although women’s/wives’ roles were expanding to include patronage as benefactresses (cf. Luke 8:1-4; Rom 16:2) and holding magistracies and offices in voluntary associations, social critics still denounced women speaking at public gatherings and banquets; moreover, “there is no record of women undertaking the task of a teacher in a professional sense either in salaried posts in great houses or in running schools as sophists.”<sup>70</sup> This is true despite women having a role in the education of their children and sons at home. In the more traditional Greek understanding, the husband was to be the teacher of his wife, not vice versa.<sup>71</sup> Although daughters were encouraged to learn, ancient philosophers expressed concern that women/wives would be uncontrolled in their speech. For example, the well-known Musonius Rufus (the Roman Socrates), a contemporary of Jesus and Paul, who viewed women as essentially equal to men and favored the education

67. Lynn R. LiDonnici, “The Images of Artemis Ephesia and Greco-Roman Worship: A Reconsideration,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 85 (1992): 389–415 at 409.

68. [5] Ἀρτεμὶν δὲ φασὶν εὐρεῖν τὴν τῶν νηπιῶν παιδίων θεράπειαν καὶ τροφάς τινας ἁρμοζούσας τῇ φύσει τῶν βρεφῶν· [6] ἀπ’ ἧς αἰτίας καὶ κουροτρόφον αὐτὴν ὀνομάζεσθαι. Diodorus Siculus, *Diodori Bibliotheca Historica, Vol 1-2*, ed. Immanuel Bekker; vol. 2; *Bibliotheca Historica* (Medford, MA: B. G. Teubneri, 1888–1890), 103.

69. Sharon H. Gritz, *Paul, Women Teachers, and the Mother Goddess at Ephesus: A Study of 1 Timothy 2:9–15 in Light of the Religious and Cultural Milieu of the First Century* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991), 37. She summarizes the work of Lewis Richard Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), 2:427, 434, 444, 449, 456, 472.

70. Winter, *Roman Wives*, 116; this view is summarized and supported by Towner, *Letters*, 218.

71. Werner W. Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, trans. Gilbert Highet, 4 vols., 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), III.175–77; cf. II.242–47.

of daughters, nevertheless makes this startling comment concerning wives: “Women who associate with philosophers are bound to be arrogant for the most part and presumptuous, in that abandoning their own households and turning to the company of men they practice speeches, talk like sophists, and analyze syllogisms, when they ought to be sitting at home spinning” (II.54-58).<sup>72</sup> At issue is the abdication of the marriage responsibilities as understood generally in Mediterranean cultures. In this regard, returning to 1 Tim 2:11-15, Towner attempts a reconstruction of why Paul would have prohibited women from teaching: 1) the wealthy women had come under the influence of false teachers (1 Tim 6:20-21; 2 Tim 2:18); 2) women may have been encouraged by those promoting heresy to be teachers, given that the heresy prohibited sexual relations/marriage (1 Tim 4:3); and 3) he showed resistance to the societal currents of the new woman.<sup>73</sup>

## THE EVIDENCE FOR A WIFE IN RELATION TO A HUSBAND IN 2:11-15

At this point I present evidence in favor of 2:11-15 having a restricted focus; Paul has a focal concern to address the husband and wife relationship. First, in every other place where Paul uses *ἀνὴρ* and *γυνή* together, he refers to the husband/wife relationship: Rom 7:2-3; 1 Cor 7:2-4, 10-14, 16, 27, 29, 33-34, 39; 11:3-15; 14:34-35; Eph 5:22-25, 28, 31, 33; Col 3:18-19; 1 Tim 3:2, 3:11-12; 5:9; Titus 1:6.<sup>74</sup> This foundational evidence is quite weighty, and unless there are excellent reasons to reject it, we would be remiss to ignore it. But, in fact, several pieces of evidence support the view that Paul was speaking of a wife in relation to a husband.

72. As quoted in Winter, *Roman Wives*, 114, acknowledging the translation of Cora E. Lutz, *Musonius Rufus, “The Roman Socrates,”* Yale Classical Studies 10 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), 42.

73. Towner, *Letters*, 219-20.

74. This suggestion was made by G. K. Beale (as cited by Hugenerberger, “Women in Church Office,” 354) and argued by Robert Mulholland (unpublished paper). Hugenerberger adds: “Outside the Pauline corpus we may add further examples of *anēr* and *gunē* in close proximity with the meanings ‘husband’ and ‘wife’ rather than ‘man’ and ‘woman’: Matt 1:16, 19-20; Mark 10:2; 10:11-12; Luke 1:27; 16:18; Acts 5:1-10; 1 Pet 3:1-7; Rev 21:2, 9. Besides these there are a number of cases where these terms (generally in the plural) occur together, often along with ‘children,’ where they are used to express either a listing or enumeration of individuals, stressing the mixed nature of the group in question: Matt 14:21; 15:38; Acts 5:14; 8:3, 12; 9:2; 17:12, 34; 22:4. A possible exception where *anēr*

Second, 2:11 shows asyndeton; there is no connecting conjunction with 2:10. This is not inconsistent with a shift in topic in 2:11 to address the behavior of individual wives within the broader social setting established in 2:1-10.<sup>75</sup> The proper determination of referent and subject matter must come from contextual factors, including number, article usage, word order, and adjunctive modifiers (see below). Paul's move from women plural (γυναικας) in 2:9-10 to a singular woman (γυνή) would indicate a narrowing of the focus, a move from general to specific.<sup>76</sup>

Third, a topical shift in 2:11 is indicated by preposing the anarthrous γυνή, which also provides a point of departure for what follows.<sup>77</sup> Since women have already been introduced and are known in the discourse (i.e. the preceding two verses), the anarthrous noun and shift from plural to singular would suggest the introduction of a new participant focus: an (individual) wife. Additionally, the preposed modifier ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ (*in quietness*) before the verb μανθανέτω (*let her learn*) is marked for focal prominence; importantly, too, the command form is more potent than either the preceding two verses (2:8-9) or the following verse (2:12), which is quite mitigated and lessened in potency (see further below).<sup>78</sup>

Fourth, by describing the γυνή in 2:11 as needing to act “in all submission” (ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ), Timothy (and the audience) would have readily understood the husband-wife relationship to be in mind, since to discuss γυνή and “submission” topically evokes a husband-wife relationship under the standardized socially-ubiquitous house code regulations. Furthermore, within the Pastoral Epistles, submission language signals house code

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bears the meaning ‘husband’ while *gunē* may mean ‘woman’ is John 4:16-19. Even here, however, *gunē* may have been chosen precisely for its aptness as a designation for a married woman. Cases of coincidental juxtaposition (generally where the terms occur in separate pericopes and so are semantically unrelated) are Mark 6:17-18, 20; Luke 23:49-50; Acts 17:4-5” (354 n.57).

75. See Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 118-20. Alternatively, asyndeton may signal close connection of ideas, thus abutting and connecting 2:11 with 2:10.

76. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 119-20 and Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 281.

77. I partially agree and disagree with Levinsohn here. On this point, he indicates: “The pre-verbal subject γυνή is a point of departure by renewal, introducing a different exhortation directed to the women” (*Discourse Features of 1 Timothy*, 12). The disagreement concerns ignoring the anarthrous γυνή and understanding 2:11 under an exhortation to (all) women generally.

78. So Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of 1 Timothy*, 12; on potency of exhortations, see Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 501-6 and the sources cited there.



regulations.<sup>79</sup> It must be said again, too, that the submission language speaks to social respectability. “Submission is used to characterize relationships when there is a concern about ensuring that the church not be discredited with people in the wider society (1 Tim. 3:4; Titus 2:5,9-10; 3:1-2).”<sup>80</sup> Between a γυναῖκα and an ἀνὴρ, elsewhere in Paul submission for wives is only to be given to their own husbands: Col 3:18 (ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς ἀνδράσιν); Eph 5:24 (τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἐν παντί); 1 Pet 3:1, 5 (τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν) and Titus 2:5 (τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν). In these places, which are all in the plural, one will find the article and often ἴδιος. But here in 2:12 the anarthrous and singular ἀνδρός may relate to the singularity of the situation: a wife in relation to a husband. Otherwise, the lack of article on ἀνδρός may introduce a husband onto the scene as a new participant (as occurs with γυναῖκα), stress the qualitative nature of the noun, and/or emphasize the role of the ἀνὴρ as an agent.<sup>81</sup> (These anarthrous nouns contrast with the articular ἡ γυναῖκα in 2:14, referring anaphorically back to Eve in 2:13.) Hugenerberger indeed argues that the anarthrous ἀνδρός does not need an article or pronoun to mean “(her) husband.”<sup>82</sup>

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79. In 1 Tim 3:4, “in submission” is described of fathers in relation to children (τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ); in Titus 2:5, wives are to be submissive to their own husbands (ὑποτασσομένας τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν); in Titus 2:9 slaves are to submit to their own masters in everything (Δούλους ἰδίοις δεσπόταις ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἐν παντί); in Titus 3:1-2 the people of God are to submit to rulers, to authorities (ὑπομύνησκε αὐτοὺς ἀρχαῖς ἐξουσίαις ὑποτάσσεσθαι). See Hugenerberger, “Women in Church Office,” 355-57.

80. Doug Heidebrecht, “Reading 1 Timothy 2:9-15 in Its Literary Context,” *Direction* 33.2 (2004): 171-84 at 177-78.

81. For a discussion of these options generally, see esp. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, ch. 9 and Long, *Koine Greek Grammar*, 416-18.

82. “Limiting ourselves to biblical usage, a number of examples readily suggest themselves where *anēr* means “(her) husband” and yet appears without either the expected article or possessive pronoun: Luke 1:34, “since I have not had relations with my husband (*epei andra ou ginōskō*)”; 2:36, “she was of a great age, having lived with her husband (*meta andros*) seven years from her virginity”; 16:18, “and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband (*apo andros*) commits adultery”; 1 Cor 7:10, “To the married I give the charge, not I but the Lord, that the wife should not separate from her husband (*gynaika apo andros*)” (Hugenerberger, “Women in Church Office,” 353).

Fifth, in 2:12 the δέ signals a new development with the point of departure being teaching (διδάσκειν) performed by the γυνή.<sup>83</sup> Both words are preposed; since διδάσκειν is likely the point of departure (assumed from the previous context of “learning”), the anarthrous preposed dative γυναικί marks her emphatically as an agent. Instead of teaching or domineering a husband, the wife was to remain quiet; it was not her “station” to teach her husband. “Quietness” too was a social virtue for wives in public in relation to their husbands. In 1 Cor 14:34-35 the concept of “quietness” (σιγάω) with the specific words of “learning” (μανθάνω) and “submission” (ὑποτάσσω) is used to refer to wives (γυναῖκαι) in relation to their husbands (ἄνδρες) in the view of evangelism/witness (14:36; cf. 12:1-2) and societal orderliness (14:33; then too in 14:35 Paul evokes the notion of “shame” which is a public conception).<sup>84</sup>

83. That δέ here signals a new development differs from the view of Levinsohn, who sees 2:12 as a parenthetical remark (*Discourse Features of 1 Timothy*, 12). However, would such a prominent parenthetical remark receive such extensive supporting statements with γάρ in which reference is made to Adam and Eve? This seems unlikely. Instead, 2:12 advances the argument of 2:11 about the social behavior of individual wives “learning” so as to address the flip-side of a wife’s learning “in submission (to her husband),” namely, “not teaching nor domineering him.” The difficulty for Levinsohn, I believe, is the ordering of the preposed elements; he understands διδάσκειν “teaching” to have focal prominence, and not to be a point of departure. The issue is how to account for the coordinative complex (διδάσκειν ... γυναικί) both being preposed; he thus appeals to how both constituents may be preposed in a coordinative phrase when only one is focally prominent (citing his *Discourse Features*, 39); but his discussion there is restricted to the preposing of attending pronominal constituents, which would not apply here to γυναικί. Two alternatives present themselves: 1) Only διδάσκειν is preposed (as a point of departure), with then the focal prominence falling on the constituent placed in final position οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω “I do not permit”, leaving γυναικί only one place to go, after διδάσκειν and immediately preposed before οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω; 2) alternatively, Levinsohn generally acknowledges that preposed constituents receive more prominence than not being preposed and that complements will follow the verb when they are off the theme line (*Discourse Features*, 38), which would not be the case here, since γυνή is still presented as (potential) agent (of teaching). And so, consequently, both διδάσκειν and γυναικί are preposed for prominence, with διδάσκειν providing the point of departure while γυναικί remains prominent and on the main theme line or topic.

84. The authenticity of these verses is questioned by notable interpreters (see review and rejection of this view in Keener, *Paul, Women & Wives*, 74-75), and perhaps most importantly, by Philip B. Payne, who first noticed the presence “Distigme-Obelos Symbols in Codex Vaticanus B Marking the Location of Interpolations, including 1 Cor 14:34-35” (Handout for ETS paper presentation); his views are

Clement of Alexandria indicates:

The wife and the husband [τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ τὸν ἄνδρα] should go to church decently attired, with natural step, clinging in silence, possessing ‘genuine love,’ being pure in body and pure in heart, and fit to offer prayers to God. All the more, let the wife [ἡ γυνή] observe this: let her be completely veiled unless she happens to be at home. For this manner of dress is solemn and inaccessible to view. Never will she err who holds before her eyes modesty and a shawl; nor will she entice another to fall into sin by uncovering her face. For the Logos wishes this, seeing that it is ‘fitting’ for her to pray veiled [cf. 1 Cor 11:13].... (*Paedagogus* 3.II (79.3-4)).<sup>85</sup>

Sixth, in 2:13-14 Paul’s appeal to Adam and Eve (“the wife” [ἡ γυνή] in 2:14) narrows the scope of reference of 2:11-15 to a husband and a wife. Adam and Eve were the first husband and wife. In each instance where Paul refers to Eve in his writings (1 Cor 11:8-9; 2 Cor 11:1-3; Eph 5:31), he does so in the context of marriage.<sup>86</sup> Towner aptly merges the horizon of the social emergence of the new woman here with his interpretation of the passage: “In such an atmosphere of enthusiasm and innovation, where the operative concept was ‘reversal of roles,’ if wives/women were usurping the public role of husbands/men and exerting authority in a way that disrespected their male counterparts, v.13 is a reminder that the Genesis story properly read in no way legitimizes the reversal or the behavior.”<sup>87</sup>

Seventh, Paul makes reference to “the childbearing” (τῆς τεκνογονίας), which is articular. Importantly, the type of noun that τεκνογονία is by formation (an incorporated noun complement formed with its verb) is “used

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found in detail in his *Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul’s Letters* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009), 225-67.

85. Text quoted, although clarifying the referents as husband and wife (not the man and the woman), from L. Michael White, *The Social Origins of Christian Architecture. Volume II Texts and Monuments for the Christian Domus Ecclesiae in its Environment*, Harvard Theological Studies 42 (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity, 1997), 52-53.

86. Hugenerger, “Women in Church Office,” 352-53, citing Ward, *The Ministry of Women*.

87. Towner, *Letters*, 232.

to designate an ‘institutionalized activity’” thus Levinsohn, does not refer to the singular unique event of Christ coming into the world,<sup>88</sup> as has been proposed by commentators.<sup>89</sup> But what, then, is the significance of the article with the noun? It would indicate the specificity of an entity that is known or knowable in the immediate discourse context, which would most naturally be the childbearing that would occur from a marriage relationship.<sup>90</sup> In this respect, Moyer Hubbard has recently compiled evidence (convincing in my view) that 2:15 should be translated, “*But she will be kept safe through the ordeal of childbearing.*”<sup>91</sup> Among the evidence he sets forth is the likely high mortality rate among women. Craig Keener, too, argues, “The most natural way for an ancient reader to have understood ‘salvation’ in the context of childbirth would have been a safe delivery, for women regularly called upon patron deities (such as Artemis and Isis) in childbirth.”<sup>92</sup>

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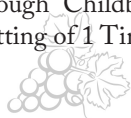
88. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of 1 Timothy*, 12-13. He here cites in support of this latter claim, Marianne Mithun, “The Evolution of Noun Incorporation,” *Language* 60 (1984): 847-94 at 848. Particularly relevant is Mithun’s summary of the functions of IN (incorporated nouns): “Since IN’s do not refer to specific entities, these constructions tend to be used in contexts without specific, individuated patients. They may be generic statements; or descriptions of on-going activities, in which a patient has been incompletely affected; or habitual activities, in which the specific patient may change; or projected activities, in which the specific patient is not yet identifiable; or joint activities, where an individual agent incompletely affects a particular patient; or activities directed at an unspecified portion of a mass” (856).

89. E.g., George W. Knight III. *The Pastoral Epistles*. The New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 147-48 and Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 229-30. Witherington indicates this interpretation is as old as Justin Martyr, and even Ignatius.

90. Such a principle of article usage corresponds with the descriptions in Levinsohn (*Discourse Features*) and Read-Heimerdinger, *The Bezan Text of Acts: A Contribution of Discourse Analysis to Textual Criticism*, JSNTSS 236 (London: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 116-44.

91. Moyer Hubbard, “Kept Safe Through Childbearing: Maternal Mortality, Justification by Faith, and the Social Setting of 1 Timothy 2:15,” *JETS* 55 (2012): 743-62.

92. Keener, *Paul, Women & Wives*, 118.



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## 1 TIM 2:11-15 IN TRANSLATION AND FINAL INTERPRETIVE STATEMENTS

11 *Let a wife continue learning quietly with entire submission* [“to her husband” implied].

12a *Moreover* [δέ], *I do not* [οὐκ] *permit a wife to be teaching* [διδάσκειν], *nor* [οὐδὲ] *assuming domineering authority* [αὐθεντεῖν] *over a husband*, [The δέ indicates a new development,<sup>93</sup> and is not marked for continuity with the preceding material, but other contextual indicators may show continuity; both activities for a wife are viewed negatively in society]

12b *but instead to be quiet* [the οὐκ ... οὐδὲ ... ἀλλ’ is a correction; Paul does not mean to be completely silent, but not to be disruptive, as was the more conservative social expectation]

13 *For* [γάρ] *Adam was formed first, then Eve*. [The γάρ marks support; The first married couple; there is a creation order for husband and wife]

14 *And Adam was not deceived, but the wife being deceived has entered into transgression*.

15 *Moreover* [δέ], *she* [the wife] *will be delivered through the bearing of children, if they* [wives] *remain in faith and love and sanctification with self-control*. [The δέ indicates a new development<sup>94</sup> and is not marked for continuity with 2:14; also, the final virtue σωφροσύνη refers back to a virtue the women were to display in 2:9]

In the end, then, this proposed interpretation addresses several perennial questions of the passage. First, in 2:12, the force of the οὐκ ... οὐδὲ ... ἀλλ’ construction and the negative or positive meaning of αὐθεντεῖν can be satisfactorily resolved. Andreas Köstenberger has argued that the οὐκ ... οὐδὲ construction must present both verbs as positive or both as negative. Since διδάσκειν is positive, therefore αὐθεντεῖν must be positive and mean simply “have authority.” Since he explains the exegetical dilemma well and the options, let me quote him at length:

[D]etailed analyses of the NT and extrabiblical Greek literature conducted by the present writer have shown that διδάσκειν and αὐθεντεῖν are linked in 1 Tim 2:12 by the coordinating conjunction οὐδὲ in a way that requires them to share either a positive or negative force. Thus 1

93. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features*, 112-18.

94. Levinsohn, *Ibid.*, 112-18.

Tim 2:12 could either be rendered as “I do not permit a woman to teach nor to exercise authority over a man” (both terms share a positive force) or “I do not permit a woman to teach *error* nor to *usurp* a man’s authority” (both terms share a negative force). Moreover, since διδάσκειν in the Pastorals always has a positive force (cf. 1 Tim 4:11; 6:2; and 2 Tim 2:2), αὐθεντεῖν, too, should be expected to have a positive force in 1 Tim 2:12, so that the rendering “I do not permit a woman to teach nor to *exercise authority* over a man” is required. Other instances of διδάσκειν in the Pastorals indicate that if a negative connotation or content is intended, the word ἐπεροδιδασκαλεῖν or other contextual qualifiers are used (cf. 1 Tim 1:3-4; 6:3; Tit 1:9-14).<sup>95</sup>

However, since Köstenberger fails to understand the negative cultural valuation of a wife teaching her husband, he also fails to acknowledge the negative implication of αὐθεντεῖν to mean “domineer/usurp” and not simply “have authority.” So, in the context of a husband-wife relationship, both concepts are negative, since it was not acceptable for a wife to be in a teaching relationship over her husband, let alone in a domineering one. Such a conclusion—that αὐθεντεῖν ἄνδρός carries a negative connotation like “to domineer/take undue authority over a husband”—aligns well with careful research on the verb in the closest temporal and literary contexts to that of 1 Timothy. At a minimum, I. Howard Marshall is correct when, after summarizing and carefully working through the research and options in context, he insists that “the whole phrase is pejorative.”<sup>96</sup> More specifically, however, investigating the most relevant ancient sources, Leland E. Wilshire concludes: “The many uses of the words from literary *koine* along with the more professional style of Greek in the Pastorals gives added weight to look for the meaning of *AUTHENTEO* as it is used by writers of literary *koine* such as Apollonius Rhodius, Polybius, the LXX

95. Andreas J. Köstenberger, “Gender Passages in the NT: Hermeneutical Fallacies Critiqued,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 56 (1994): 259–83. Köstenberger’s research on οὐδέ is in “Syntactical Background Studies to 1 Tim. 2:12 in the NT and Extrabiblical Greek Literature,” in *Discourse and Other Topics: Essays on the Greek of the NT*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and D. A. Carson, JSNTSup (Sheffield: JSOT Press), 156–79 and in “A Complex Sentence Structure in 1 Timothy 2:12,” in *Women in the Church*, ed. Andreas J. Köstenberger, Thomas R. Schreiner, and H. Scott Baldwin (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 81–103.

96. Marshall, *Pastorals*, 456–60 at 459.



*Book of Wisdom*, Diodorus Siculus, Flavius Josephus, and Philo Judeaus. All of these authors use the word to apply to some sort of criminal behavior or murder.”<sup>97</sup> Clearly, the verb αὐθεντεῖν carried an inherently negative sense in the first century, especially regarding a wife in relation to a husband, and corresponds to the negative social-cultural valuation of a wife teaching a husband.

Second, Paul’s admonition in 2:12 using “I do not permit...” (οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω) employs a form of admonition that is less “potent” than an imperatival form such as was just used in the previous verse: “let a wife learn...” (Γυνὴ ... μανθανέτω). Using such an indirect statement as “I do not permit...” is what Levinsohn calls a “mitigated” exhortation. Surveying exhortations along a scale of most potent to least potent while discussing verbal mood, person, directness, contextual orienters, social factors, etc., Levinsohn turns to consider 2:12: “A very indirect form of exhortation is found in 1 Timothy 2:12. By using the orienter οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω *I do not allow*, Paul is indirectly exhorting Timothy to follow his example....”<sup>98</sup>

Indeed, excepting the occurrence in 1 Cor 14:34, Philip B. Payne concludes, “the verb ‘to permit’ (ἐπιτρέπω) never refers to a universal or permanent situation in any of its uses in the LXX or NT. Especially its use in the first person singular present indicative makes it unlikely that Paul intended 1 Tim 2:12 as a universal or permanent prohibition.”<sup>99</sup> Moreover, this present article has provided the social-cultural context to explain why Paul would give such an indirect exhortation, since Paul’s practice was conditioned according to societal standards. Such a mitigation of the injunction provides a clue for our contemporary interpretation and appropriation of Paul’s teaching. In fact, in a Western context, women commonly hold teaching positions “over” men in a variety of settings; and for a wife to hold such a teaching position “over” a husband would not be a breach of social decorum generally. However, it would be problematic if she would teach *domineeringly* over her husband. However, the converse would also be true: Any husband who was “over” a wife in some teaching position and held such a position *domineeringly* would also be acting inappropriately and un-Christ-like.

97. Wilshire, *Insight*, 31.

98. Levinsohn, *Non-Narrative Discourse Analysis*, 76–81 at 79.

99. Payne, *Man and Woman*, 395.



Third, Paul appeals to Genesis in 2:13, since Paul has a married couple in mind. Thus, in 2:14 the articular “*the* child birth” refers to a birth of a child within the marriage relationship. This follows the article principle of the entity already known or assumed as known from the context, since Paul has been speaking of a husband and wife. So also, then, the verb of “salvation” (σῶζω) indicates being delivered from the ordeal of child birthing, a fearful event, in which often appeal was made to a goddess (such as Artemis) for deliverance.

## CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by relating two circumstances in which contemporary believers have found themselves while engaged in evangelistic mission, in order to help us properly envision the circumstances of the early Christian movement. I understand that in the 19th century, as Christian missionaries worked in China, a good number of missionaries were women. A problem arose, however, since cultural norms prohibited a woman from teaching men, which, if it occurred, would have stigmatized the Christians as against Chinese culture and truly foreigners to be rejected outright, apart from any consideration of the truthfulness of the Gospel. This impasse was bridged, however, by physically erecting a room divider with all the women sitting with the female missionary teacher, while the men sat in the “other room” overhearing the teaching. Consider also how missionaries today must navigate the cultural mores present within strict Islamic countries—would such missionaries teach that newly converted Christian women/wives throw off their veils in public and by doing so, disrespect their husbands, because in Christ there is neither “male nor female”? If the women did so, they would do so at peril to their very lives and the lives of other Christians in their house churches. I would maintain that the Early Christian movement is much nearer to both these cultural scenarios than to our own in Western contexts, and this has large implications for understanding the shared cognitive environment between Paul and Timothy as he writes 1 Tim 2. So, given the careful scrutiny of the marriage relationship and the management of the household as the central organizational unit within the larger political climate in the Mediterranean world, Paul does not permit practices that would be damaging to the marriage relationship (domineering), nor that would jeopardize the extension of the Gospel to all persons by stigmatizing the Way of Christ as socially disruptive (a wife teaching a husband).



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